(c) if not, the reasons for non-adherence of the limit;

(d) whether any responsibility has been fixed for delay in this regard; and

(e) if so, the action taken against those responsible for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) (a) Normally the telephones are shifted from one exchange to another in 15 days subject to area being technically feasible.

(b) Some delay was observed in one case.

(c) There was delay in issue of order for transfer.

(d) and (e) Warning has been issued to the concerned officials.

Long distance telephone facilities by private companies

773. SHRI C. O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of private companies engaged in providing long distance telephone facilities in the country;

(b) the number of connections provided by each of these companies both in urban and rural areas till 31st December, 2001, separately;

(c) whether any of these companies has been found violating the tender agreement of providing 10 per cent of connections to the rural areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) These companies have been given licence for National Long Distance Telephone Service.

(b) and (c) No company had started service till 31.12.2001. These companies are not required to provide telephone connection.

(d) Does not arise in view of (b) & (c) above.